

Ross E. Eisenberg

Vice President

Energy & Resources Policy

July 25, 2012

The Honorable Daniel Coats
493 Russell Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Coats:

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the largest industrial trade association in the United States, representing over 12,000 small, medium and large manufacturers in all 50 states, supports the "Coal Miner Employment and Domestic Energy Infrastructure Protection Act." This bill would prevent, through 2013, implementation of the "Stream Protection Rule," a regulation under development by the Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) that would drastically reduce domestic coal production and put thousands of miners out of work.

Coal is one of the nation's most abundant energy resources and a vital part of our efforts to meet our energy and transportation needs. Coal generates a significant percentage of our nation's electricity, and maintaining coal in a diverse national energy portfolio is in the national economic interest. The OSM's forthcoming "Stream Protection Rule" would cause unnecessary harm to the mining sector at a time when that industry is already hurting badly.

The OSM's own analysis concludes the rule would cause coal production to drop between 20 and 30 percent in the Eastern United States and 50 percent in underground mines nationwide, placing more than 20,000 coal mining and related jobs in jeopardy. Additionally, OSM's own estimations indicated the rule would increase the unemployment rate in some coal mining regions to levels exceeding 10 percent. Private sector analysis of the rule indicates OSM's estimates may be low, with potential job losses in the hundreds of thousands.

The Coal Miner Employment and Domestic Energy Infrastructure Protection Act would provide the coal industry a much-needed regulatory interlude from OSM's Stream Protection Rule. The industry is already bound by a stream buffer zone rule issued in 2008; this rule was finalized after a five-year rulemaking process and over 5,000 pages of environmental analysis. Allowing OSM to continue to proceed with an unnecessary rewrite of that regulation would cost jobs in an industry that simply cannot afford to lose any more.

The NAM supports your legislation and stands ready to work with you to advance the bill through the Senate.

Sincerely,



Ross Eisenberg
Vice President, Energy and Resources Policy

Leading Innovation. Creating Opportunity. Pursuing Progress.